

TANGENTS  
BY IHTISHAM KABIR

Column 101

This is the 101<sup>st</sup> Tangents column. Thank you, dear reader, for reading and supporting Tangents over the last two years.

The roots of this column go back to 1995 when we returned here after living abroad for many years. Friends in the USA were eager to know how we were faring. Instead of writing emails to them, I started writing a blog called *Back to Bangladesh*. In it I recounted - with words and photos - our adventures while adjusting back in our native land, including the joys and challenges, discoveries and re-discoveries. Much had changed, but much remained the same.

The readership of the blog soon grew beyond my friends' circle to those with a general interest in Bangladesh.

I had always been a keen photographer. Now I wandered with my camera, photographing the places I found myself in and the people I met. In the blog, I experimented with ways of mixing text and photographs to tell stories and discovered different ways to assemble a documentary narrative using words and pictures.

While re-discovering Bangladesh, I was impressed by her progress and the resilience and hard-work of her people. Living abroad, I had disliked the overwhelming negative light in which western media presented Bangladesh. After all, wasn't this the same land that my parents, grandparents, and their parents had lived, loved and worked in? It couldn't be that bad! So in my portrayals I strived for an even-handed representation of this country.

In early 2010, after persistent encouragement and inspiration from the editor of this newspaper, I wrote a proposal outlining my vision for Tangents.

I wanted to tell stories with words and photographs: a diversion that would entertain and educate while empathizing with the Bangladeshi experience. I would succeed, I thought, if readers sought out the column every week.

The name Tangents came from this: our daily lives are like circles, going round and round every day. A tangent is a line that moves away from the circle after touching it. My goal was to take the reader on a tangent away from day-to-day life for a few minutes every week.

Sometimes the column was based on delving deeper past the surface of a photographic subject. On other occasions, I wrote about thoughts, memories and dreams triggered by a photograph. Sometimes



PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

...where my parents, grandparents and their parents lived, loved and worked...

the text of the column was the real story and the photograph simply illustrated it. Thus, I tried to vary the relationship between text and photograph and the relative weights they carried.

Finding the topic every week was the biggest challenge for me. Often, when my intellect chose a topic without my heart's consent, I had great difficulty writing about it. Whenever I felt passionately about the subject, however, the writing flowed freely, no matter how difficult the material.

Truly, I feel blessed that I have had this opportunity, I feel blessed to have these few minutes from you, the reader, and I feel blessed to explore this beautiful land and her people who readily share their stories with me, which I will continue to write about.

www.facebook.com/tangents.ikabir. The blog is at backtobangladesh.blogspot.com

No disunity within grand alliance: Inu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dismissing any speculation of disunity within the Awami League-led grand alliance, Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu yesterday said they would continue their fight together against "the alliance of communalists, militants and war criminals".

"I don't think there is any political dispute and disunity within the grand alliance. There's not any dispute over HM Ershad and Jatiya Party either," he told a meet-the-reporters programme at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU).

The newly appointed minister also said AL leader Tofail Ahmed and Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon did not have any disagreement with the politics of the grand alliance though they had not accepted the offer to join the cabinet.

About the present crisis on caretaker issue, Inu, also president of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), said talks over the government system during the election period had started, and it would be unwise to take any decision unilaterally. The general election should be held in a free, fair and neutral manner with the participation of all the parties, he said.

"Our government has invited the opposition parties for a dialogue but has not got any answer from them yet." If the opposition parties want to take part in the election, then today or tomorrow the dialogue must be held, he added.

Following a demand from journalists, the minister gave assurance of taking initiatives to form a separate tribunal to dispose cases of killing and torturing of journalists. "I will talk with the law minister and the home minister in this regard."

About the killing of journalist couple Sagar and Runi, he said he had already talked with the home minister about the murder and hoped that the home ministry would take immediate action to present a clear picture of the murder before the country's people.

Inu said he learned that many journalist killing cases had not been disposed of over the years or the investigations were not done properly or the cases were hanging. "I want to revive the cases and will take proper steps to speed up their disposal process."

About the eighth wage board for journalists, the information minister said he had already taken administrative initiatives and hoped that the announcement of the decision on the wage board would come within the next one or two weeks. He also said he would sit with the journalist leaders on the wage board issue for the journalists of broadcast media.

DRU President Sakhawat Hossain Badsha and General Secretary Sajjad Alam Khan Tapu also spoke at the programme.

NEWS IN *brief*

Strict law to stop food adulteration demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Bangladesh Juba Union yesterday demanded enactment of strict laws to stop food adulteration and mixing toxic chemicals with food considering their adverse effect on public health.

In a human chain, they also demanded to stop the sale of formalin and other toxic chemicals in open market as well as strict monitoring on import of these chemicals, said a press release.

The human chain was organised in front of

AL advisory council, executive committee meetings on Oct 8, 13

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A meeting of the ruling Awami League Advisory Council and National Executive Committee will be held on October 8 and 13 respectively to discuss country's socio-political and organisational matters.

Both the meetings will be held at Prime Minister and AL President Sheikh Hasina's official residence Gono Bhaban in the capital with the AL chief in the chair, said an AL press release.

Sources said the AL chief might induct some former

RU admission test now starts from October 4

RU CORRESPONDENT

Admission test of honours programme of Rajshahi University for the 2012-13 academic session will begin on October 4 and continue till October 9.

Earlier, the admission test was scheduled to start from October 6.

In a meeting on Thursday night, the university authorities changed the starting date following appeal from a large number of admission seekers, said Aslam Hossain, deputy registrar of RU.

Details of admission test can be found on the

Project launched to prevent unsafe migration of children

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Aiming to strengthen services of local government institutions and non-state actors for prevention of unsafe rural-urban migration of children, a project styled "Rural Urban Child Migration" was launched on Thursday.

The European Union, Save the Children International, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association and the United Development Initiative for Programmed Action launched the project in the capital, said a press release.

Along with reduction of rural-urban migration of children, the project, costing around 1.35 million euros, aims to improve the situation of migrant children.

Jobra people worried over Grameen Bank's future

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Ninety residents of Jobra village have expressed their concern over the recent amendments to the Grameen Bank ordinance, which would allegedly turn the microfinance institution into a government-controlled organisation.

If the bank is not run by its own people, its operation might be hampered, they said in a statement yesterday, and urged the government "to leave the power to operate Grameen Bank with its directors".

Grameen Bank started its journey from Jobra of Hathazari upazila in 1976.

The statement said when Prof Muhammad Yunus started Grameen Bank's operation in the region, he did not receive any collateral against the micro-loans he extended to the poor. Moreover, he used his own money to carry out the loaning activities and established Nabajug Tebhaga Khamar to create a green revolution and continue the bank's operation there, it said.

The Grameen Bank model is being copied around the world, and it has been so successful that Dr Yunus and his bank got Nobel Prize in 2006, bringing a great honour and pride for the country, the statement added.

Local public representatives and members of different social groups among others signed the statement. They include Chairman of No 11 Fatehpur Union Parishad Md Jaker Hossain, its two former chairmen Saleh Jahur Bahadur and Md Sekandar Mia, President of Jobra Primary School Governing Body Md Lokman Chowdhury, and President of Hathazari Buddhist Welfare Council Ananda Bikash Barua.



Agitators block Dhaka-Sylhet highway at Basail in Narsingdi by putting logs and vandalised and torched vehicles including a bus, inset, after police charged baton on a rally of Lokman Sangram Parishad, a locals' group demanding trial of the killers of slain mayor Lokman Hossain, yesterday. The rally was called in protest of a programme of Labour and Employment Minister Rajiuddin Ahmed Raju in Raipura upazila scheduled for Monday. Narsingdi Mayor Kamruzzaman said they protested against the minister for "providing shelter to the killers of Lokman". (Story on Page 20) PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Six arrested for robbery in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives arrested six people in the capital from September 17 to yesterday in connection with a robbery in an expatriate's house at Senpara in Mirpur area on September 6.

Police also recovered a pistol, a magazine, six tolas of gold ornaments, US\$150 and other valuables from their possession.

On September 6, dacoits robbed 22 tolas of gold ornaments, cash Tk 3 lakh, US\$200 and valuables from the resident of Md Jafar Ullah Chowdhury in Senpara.

The arrestees -- Rubel, 21, Mama Milon, 28, Mamun, 22, Sayeed, 28, Adil, 23 and Shuvo, 35 were produced at a press briefing at Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Media Centre yesterday.

At the briefing, Mashiur Rahman, additional deputy commissioner of Detective Branch (DB) of police, said they arrested Mamun, Adil and Milon on September 17 on information from Sayeed who was caught by mob on the day of robbery.

ANTI-ISLAM FILM, CARTOON  
Islamist orgs stage protest

DMP imposes ban on rallies in Paltan area

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing anger at a US film and a French weekly's cartoon mocking Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (pbuh), some Islamist organisations staged demonstrations in the capital's Paltan area after Juma prayers yesterday.

Hundreds of activists of the organisations, including Bangladesh Khelafat Andolan, Bangladesh Khelafat Chhatra Andolan, Chhatra Jamiat, Khelafat Chhatra Majlish and Isalmi Ain Bastabayan Committee, took part in the demonstrations.

They burnt US and French flags and a symbolic coffin and an effigy of the US president, brought out protest processions from Dainik Bangla intersection to Jatiya Press Club and threatened to seize the US embassy in Dhaka today.

Meanwhile Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) imposed a ban on holding rallies in

Paltan, Baitul Mukarram National Mosque, Kakrail, Dainik Bangla intersection, Bijoy Nagar and adjacent areas from 5:00pm yesterday till further orders.

DMP Commissioner Benazir Ahmed, in a press release, said the ban was imposed as rallies called by two rival Islamist organisations, Sammilito Olama Mashayekh Parishad and 12 Islamist parties, at the same place today may lead to conflicts.

The crudely made video, filmed in California and circulated on the Internet under several titles including "Innocence of Muslims", portrays the Prophet Mohammad engaged in crude and offensive behaviour.

The weekly, Charlie Hebdo, on Wednesday, published the cartoon which includes obscene images intended to represent Prophet Mohammad, as opposed to any other Muslim.

WEATHER TODAY

Change in temperature unlikely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Rajshahi, Rangpur and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said.

Day and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:55pm and rises tomorrow at 5:48am.

Country's highest temperature 34.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chuadanga and lowest 24.0 degrees at Rangamati.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.5	27.4	76	71
Chittagong	31.5	26.0	76	81
Rajshahi	34.0	27.2	88	84
Rangpur	32.2	27.0	88	84
Khulna	33.5	27.0	77	80
Barisal	32.6	26.6	78	76